

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR PERSONNEL OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

A course focused on children with vision impairment and their families will be offered by the Missouri School for the Blind through Project VIISA (Vision Impaired In-Service in America), which was developed by the SKI\*HI Institute at Utah State University. Applications are now being accepted for Course I, which will be conducted November 16-18, 2011 and March 28-30, 2012. **Registration deadline is October 14, 2011.**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Course I: Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Vision Impairment and Their Families.*

This course will cover topics related to the unique needs of infants and toddlers who are vision impaired, including: vision impairment and effects on learning and development; medical aspects of vision impairment; cortical visual impairment, functional vision assessment; working with families; motor development; orientation and mobility (O&M); use of touch and hearing; interaction with objects (play, cognition, concept development); premature/vulnerable infants; developing the IFSP; and transition from home to center-based preschool.

### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE I

Fifteen participants will be selected to take the course. Course participants must hold a bachelor's degree. Priority will be given to early interventionists/early learning personnel and vision teachers presently working with infants and toddlers who are visually impaired in an early intervention or early learning program.

### HOW, WHERE, AND WHEN WILL THE COURSES BE TAUGHT?

The course consists of:

- An initial 18 hours of onsite classroom teaching over a Wednesday (1:00 PM-5:00 PM), Thursday (8:00 AM-4:30 PM) and Friday (8:00 AM-4:30 PM) on November 16-18, 2011, in St. Louis.
- **Five home study packages with readings and written assignments are required and are to be mailed to the instructor. Some of these assignments will involve observations and hands-on mini-practicum experiences with infants and/or toddlers who are vision impaired.**
- A final 18-hour onsite class with the instructors over a Wednesday (1:00 PM-5:00 PM) Thursday (8:00 AM-4:30 PM) and Friday (8:00 AM-4:30 PM) in St. Louis on March 28-30, 2012. Student grading will be based on a portfolio assessment and attendance at the two onsite classes. There will be no final exam. The onsite sessions will include the use of lecture, discussion, video, small group application in case studies, observation and practical experiences.

### WHO WILL TEACH THE COURSE?

Bess Dennison, lead instructor, has worked with the VIISA and INSITE Outreach Projects at the SKI-HI Institute over the past 25+ years. She currently works part-time at SKI-HI and carries a part-time caseload of children for Utah School for the Blind Outreach Program. Ann Straw, co-instructor, holds an M.Ed. from Washington University in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. Ms. Straw is currently a Parent Advisor for the MoSPIN Program.

### WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

Registration is **free**. Those who complete all onsite classes and assignments may elect to receive two hours of college credit offered through Lindenwood University; tuition for the course is \$120.00. The primary text will be the two-volume *Resources for Family Centered Intervention for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers Who Are Visually Impaired*, developed through the SKI\*HI Institute. These texts, in addition to the home study package material with additional readings, will be provided at no cost.

If you are interested in applying for Project VIISA Course I, contact:

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